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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



THOMAS D. WATKINS, JR.
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

August 28, 2002

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Thomas D. Watkins, Jr., Chairman

SUBJECT: Approval of Proposed *Model Standards for Out-of-School Time Programs in Michigan* for Purposes of Public Comment

Public attention is increasingly focused on the many hours that school-age children spend outside the classroom. Children learn during all the hours they are awake, but spend only about 20 percent of those hours in school. In addition, parents of most school-age children work and are unavailable some of the time when children are not in school. Michigan's Children's new report, *After the Bell Rings*, indicates that more than half of all elementary school children in the state report caring for themselves at some point before or after school. Enrichment activities and academic support as well as youth development activities, before and after school, on weekends and during school recess periods, including summer, have become important to children's lives and an extension of their learning. It is critical that the experiences in which students participate during their out-of-school time be of the quality that will promote their academic and social development, as well as keep them safe and healthy with appropriate supervision. Legislation under consideration in the House of Representatives would require the Department of Education to convene a task force to develop quality after-school programs for all Michigan children.

Currently, some comprehensive out-of-school time programs in Michigan are required under P.A. 116 of 1973 to be licensed or approved by the Department of Consumer and Industry Services, Division of Child Day Care Licensing. Other programs are considered "single purpose" and do not require the oversight of that agency. Additional legislation, House Bills 5384 and 5385, pending in the Michigan Senate, would move oversight of out-of-school time programs located in public schools to the sole authority of the local boards of education. The legislation, as drafted, requires the Department of Education to adopt model standards for these programs. Each local program would be required to report to its community and intermediate school district on its compliance with the model standards.

Federal funding for out-of-school time programs, under Title IV, Part B of the No Child Left Behind Act, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, has been forwarded to the states for administration. Michigan's plan requires that we develop model standards to use as a guide for on-site monitoring of these programs.

Education YES! includes an indicator on "extended learning opportunities." School buildings will report on their out-of-school time offerings, among other programs, to receive credit for this indicator.

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During the last two years, the Family Independence Agency entered into an interagency agreement with the Department of Education to fund three school-age child care facilities as “super-pilots.” One of the tasks of the three programs, along with Department personnel from the Office of School Excellence, Early Childhood and Parenting Programs, was to develop *Model Standards for Out-of-School Time Programs in Michigan*. These model standards will serve the purposes of legislation pending in the House and the Senate, as well as the needs for administration and monitoring of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers grants. The model standards will also provide input for the extended learning opportunities indicator in *Education YES!* The draft of the standards is enclosed as Attachment A. Attachment B includes the members of the committee and their affiliations.

Attachment C is a plan to accept public comment on the proposed model standards. After the period of public comment and meetings, the committee will reconvene to consider the comments. A final recommendation on adoption of the model standards is expected for the February 2003 State Board of Education meeting.

It is recommended that the State Board of Education approve the proposed *Model Standards for Out-of-School Time Programs in Michigan* for purposes of public comment as attached to the Superintendent’s memorandum dated August 28, 2002.

Proposed
Model Standards for
Out-of-School Time Programs
in Michigan

INTRODUCTION

In fiscal years 2000/2001 and 2001/2002, Early Childhood and Parenting Programs of the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), in collaboration with the Family Independence Agency (FIA), funded a Super Pilot Out-of-School Time (OST) project. The purpose of this project was to improve quality, increase sustainability, and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies utilized by OST programs to develop and enhance quality. This project was also charged with the task of identifying best practices, creating an operations manual for use by school districts developing OST programs, and developing an evaluation protocol for use with OST programs. The original charge was to develop these tools for schools. They will be available and appropriate for all OST programs.

A committee was formed from MDE and three school districts representing geographically diverse urban, rural and small town populations. These representative districts employ directors with leadership roles in statewide professional organizations and have made a commitment to quality through National School-Age Care Alliance accreditation. The OST committee was charged with the task of writing model standards for quality OST programming. The standards may be used as a framework for the design and implementation of high-quality programs that meet the specific and different needs of children during the hours outside of the school day. This committee began in August 2001 and concluded its assignment in June 2002. The committee's extensive research and practical knowledge of a combined 95 years of experience in OST programs resulted in a draft of this document.

This document is designed to assist schools and other organizations in developing high-quality Out-of-School Time programs for students aged 5 through 12. The standards presented are based on research concerning quality programs for school-age children. This document will assist local administrators in their efforts to implement high-quality programs for students in OST programs.

A set of critical components is presented as five distinct areas for which quality standards have been established. These components are:

- Human Relationships;
- Environment;
- Program;
- Administration; and
- Staffing.

These standards define the recognized indicators of OST program quality. References are listed at the end of the document and refer to the specific indicators.

DEFINITION

Out-of-School Time (OST) comprises those times when school is not in session, including before school, after school, times and days when there is no school due to teacher training, snow days, vacations, summer vacation, etc. Out-of-School Time programs ideally include both Extended Learning Opportunities (ELO) to support the school day and School-Age Child Care (SACC) to support working parents.

Nationally, the Afterschool Alliance and other national organizations alternatively refer to all OST programs as "afterschool" programs.

Proposed Model Standards for Out-of-School Time Programs in Michigan

I. Human Relationships	
<u>Standard:</u>	<u>Quality Indicators:</u>
A. Adult/Child Relationships 1. Are authentic and positive 2. Establish primary relationships	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff treat children respectfully, positively, and warmly. <input type="checkbox"/> Children appear to be comfortable and happy in the program. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff give attention to children and their individual needs, special interests, and abilities.
B. Child management is handled with care and respect, focusing on prevention and using methodology which promotes positive self-esteem.	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff members are kind, fair, and caring to all children. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff set appropriate, realistic limits that are consistently enforced. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff model and encourage communication, cooperation, and conflict resolution.
C. Staff to child ratios and group size are established to insure that authentic, helpful, and caring relationships can be established and maintained between children in the program and the staff. Minimum staff to child ratios are maintained consistently.	<input type="checkbox"/> Adequate numbers of qualified staff are hired, trained, and on-site. <input type="checkbox"/> Groups of children do not exceed 30 in order to maintain a high-quality program. <input type="checkbox"/> Minimum ratios: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-7 year olds—one adult for ten children • 8-12 year olds—one adult for 15 children.
D. Program development and implementation is carried out in such a way to include significant child choice and involvement in planning.	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff give children many opportunities to choose what they will do, how they will do it, and with whom. <input type="checkbox"/> Children are included in the planning process. <input type="checkbox"/> Children are encouraged to offer ideas, take the initiative, and make suggestions.
E. Parents are appropriately involved in the planning, management, evaluation, and improvement of the program.	<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple systems are in place for parents to be involved and to provide input regarding policies, procedures, curriculum, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple systems are in place for maintaining communication with parents. <input type="checkbox"/> Families feel welcome, respected, and comfortable in the program.
F. Staff (program staff and administrative staff) develop open and supportive relationships focused on the needs of the program.	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff communicate and cooperate with each other consistently. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff support each other through shared planning, coordination, and flexibility. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff treat each other with respect and tolerance.
G. Stakeholders in the school and community are identified and involved and/or informed of the program, benefits to the children, families and the impact on the community as a whole.	<input type="checkbox"/> OST staff, school staff, and members of the community conduct regular meetings to coordinate programming, curriculum, and goals. <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing communication and linkages between OST staff, school staff, community members, and families are established and encouraged.
H. Staff composition and relationships with each other and the children regularly reflect sensitivity to diversity and gender equity.	<input type="checkbox"/> The program employs staff members who reflect the languages, cultures, and genders of the children and families served. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff training is provided in cultural diversity and gender equity. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff members are sensitive to culture and gender.

II. Environment

<u>Standard:</u>	<u>Quality Indicators:</u>
A. The indoor environment is established to offer a safe, comfortable, age-appropriate, stable facility with adequate space in which to carry out the program.	<input type="checkbox"/> There is specific space that is safe, clean, and comfortable with enough room (a minimum of 35 square feet per child) for all program activities. <input type="checkbox"/> The room is arranged and furnished for a variety of learning and recreational activities including space for active and quiet play, homework, and spaces for groups of children as well as for small groups and privacy for individual children. <input type="checkbox"/> There is adequate space for storage of equipment and materials as well as personal possessions of children and staff.
B. The outdoor environment is established to offer a safe and age-appropriate area for daily outdoor play and sports.	<input type="checkbox"/> There is adequate outdoor space available for large motor and sports activities daily. <input type="checkbox"/> Children may choose to use a wide variety of outdoor equipment and games for active and quiet play.
C. All materials and equipment, both indoor and outdoor, are purchased and maintained to provide learning and play experiences that are age-appropriate, individually supportive and regularly offer multiple choices.	<input type="checkbox"/> All outdoor equipment and spaces are suitable for the sizes and abilities of all children and are maintained in a safe manner.
D. Materials and equipment provide an enriched environment with regularly refreshed materials (including enough, in good repair, covering a range of activities and ages).	<input type="checkbox"/> Enough materials and equipment are available to provide for at least three activity spaces per child. <input type="checkbox"/> There is a full range of learning and recreational equipment and materials (sand/water, woodworking, art, literacy, recreational materials, etc.). <input type="checkbox"/> Materials and equipment are available for a variety of choices, individual and group interests.
E. The environment is accessible to children and families with disabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Program is barrier-free.
F. The environment reflects the diversity represented in the population of the community and gender equity.	<input type="checkbox"/> Décor, materials and resources reflect family backgrounds and interests of children. <input type="checkbox"/> There are posters and photographs that reflect diverse populations. Materials and equipment are representative of a variety of cultures/populations.
G. The environment reflects various learning styles and abilities of all children.	<input type="checkbox"/> There are a variety of age-appropriate materials within active and quiet spaces to accommodate children's learning styles and abilities.

III. Program

Standard:	Quality Indicators:
A. Activities are planned and supported through resources which reflect the interests and abilities of the children enrolled and provide support for the school-day activities, especially supplementing the areas of development not regularly provided during the school day.	☐ Resources are available and utilized to provide a variety of child-centered activities that increase the opportunities for children to develop in all areas (social, emotional, academic, physical, and cultural).
B. The comprehensive curriculum addresses the needs of the whole child, individual as well as group needs, and supports the school curriculum.	☐ Staff members demonstrate awareness of children's individual daily needs and plan to accommodate them in daily programming.
C. Materials are of sufficient quantity and type to support the curriculum for all ages.	☐ A minimum of three developmentally appropriate activity choices are available for each child daily. The enriched environment includes a wide variety of multiple materials and equipment which are available to children.
D. When appropriate, field trips, special community visitors, and other activities which support the curriculum are included in the program.	☐ The monthly schedule includes at least one field trip, one special visitor, or one enrichment activity which supports the curriculum.
E. The daily schedule is consistent yet flexible offering stability (particularly in health and nutrition components) and the ability for children and staff to adjust the schedule for the needs and interests of the children.	☐ The daily activity and snack schedule is prepared in advance and is made available to parents. Staff are trained and empowered to make daily decisions to meet the individual needs of the children.
F. School day and OST activities are linked in ways that support the academic development of each individual child.	☐ OST programming includes developmentally appropriate academic support and enrichment activities that complement the school curriculum.
G. Staff are educated on the character education curriculum components and can demonstrate their presence in annual programming.	☐ Curriculum planning includes annually at least two or more of the following components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • service learning; • character development; • asset building; • resistance education (saying NO to drugs/sex, good decision making); • peer activities—older with younger; • intergenerational activities; and • peer mediation.
H. Computer technology experience which helps children become comfortable with both skills and materials should be available at all ages.	☐ Computers and age-appropriate software (or access to) are present in the program and used regularly by all participants.
I. The daily schedule provides for regular outdoor activities.	☐ Each child has a chance to play outdoors at least 30 minutes each three-hour block of time, weather permitting.

IV. Administration

Standard:	Quality Indicators:
A. Prior to developing a new program, a comprehensive needs assessment is conducted and the results are used in planning.	<input type="checkbox"/> A needs assessment is administered to prospective parents, school staff, and when appropriate to children. Program development and implementation is based on the data.
B. The budget established reflects input from appropriate stakeholders, utilizing a process that is inclusive and comprehensive.	<input type="checkbox"/> The budget development process includes the program director, other school administrative staff and the district/agency budget staff.
C. Fund development, revenue, and fiscal management systems are planned for and implemented to provide for a high-quality program supporting these standards.	<input type="checkbox"/> Revenues and expenses are reported and monitored utilizing effective business office procedures. Fees are established to support quality programming. Grant funds, Family Independence Agency subsidies, scholarships and donations are used to support program goals.
D. Proper procedures for the administration and handling of medication and individual medical procedures are developed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Procedures are written, implemented and available for staff and parents.
E. Written policies and a training system are in place for emergencies.	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff are trained in plans for emergencies which include: written plans, practices and regular reviews. An individual onsite is trained with first aid and blood born pathogens.
F. The program has developed a policies and procedures handbook for parents and staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear, concise, thorough handbooks are developed, updated regularly and given to each parent and employee (one for parents and one for staff). The policies and procedures are administered in a consistent and equitable manner and include at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enrollment policies; • attendance policies (including sign-in/sign-out procedures); and • discipline procedures.
G. A system of regular program evaluation is established and used for on-going program improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/> At least twice a year, staff, children and parents are given the opportunity to evaluate the program and the results are used for systematic program improvements.
H. Program management training is in place for site directors/supervisors.	<input type="checkbox"/> Professional development is planned for and implemented to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • program content; • delivery system; and • methods for working effectively with children, parents, and staff.

V. Staffing

<u>Standard:</u>	<u>Quality Indicators:</u>
A. Policies and standards are developed and written related to staff qualifications for each position, including written job descriptions used in recruiting and hiring staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> A written job description is available for each position in the OST program, which includes the title and qualifications needed, job duties, and salary/benefit range.
B. A written plan for recruitment, orientation, and retention of staff is developed and implemented.	<input type="checkbox"/> The written plan for recruitment, orientation and retention of staff is in place prior to the start of a new program. This plan is consistent and used by administrators for implementation and decision-making. The plan is considered by board members and administrators in budget development. Orientation is planned to take place prior to staff working with children.
C. Each site has an adult site supervisor or director with decision-making responsibilities.	<input type="checkbox"/> The site supervisor/director is at least 21 years of age and has an appropriate educational background.
D. A written plan for on-going staff development is implemented and budgeted for. This plan must include, at a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child development; • child management; • CPR/first aid; • record keeping; and • appropriate activities. 	<input type="checkbox"/> The plan for staff development is reflected in the overall staff development plan for the school or agency, is reflected in the budget, and is based on an assessment of the needs of the program and the staff. Staff qualifications, as well as program evaluations, are taken into consideration and are consistently implemented.
E. A written, board-approved compensation plan is developed to retain qualified staff and maintain quality programs.	<input type="checkbox"/> The written, board approved compensation plan is clearly related to the local market, staff qualifications, program quality and staff retention. This plan is consistently implemented with short-term and long-term fiscal sustainability plans in place.
F. All staff who work with children are physically/mentally able to perform outlined job duties and free of criminal convictions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff physicals/TB tests are required prior to employment. Criminal background checks are required prior to employment. Periodic updates of each are planned.
G. Staff evaluation is established and used for ongoing professional development.	<input type="checkbox"/> Each staff member is evaluated semi-annually by the supervisor for the purpose of professional development. Staff evaluations are used to guide decision making about professional development activities.

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